

## **Media Release**

# **Now is the time to save the Powerhouse and \$1.5 billion**

With the resignation of the NSW Arts Minister now is the time for the Premier to step up and scrap his \$1.5 billion Powerhouse mistake.

With NSW in the grip of a pandemic that looks set to wipe out the state's arts and entertainment industries without significant government support, along with the threat of a state-wide public sector wage freeze, proceeding with the controversial Powerhouse move now is a criminal waste of money.

**Greens MP David Shoebridge said:**

"There is a lot of love in the community for the Powerhouse Museum and now is the time for the government to admit its mistake, step back, and save this iconic institution.

"From day one this was a vanity project for a government that has been all too willing to spend billions of dollars on controversial projects without cost controls or clear goals. With the Minister gone this project must follow.

"In the middle of a terrible pandemic this is not the time to flush \$1.5 billion down the river on a controversial project with so few public benefits.

"These funds can and must be redirected to where they are needed right now, to refurbishing the existing Powerhouse, saving the arts and paying people's wages," Mr Sheobridge said.

**Greens MP and Arts Spokesperson Cate Faehrmann said:**

"Following the Arts Minister's resignation yesterday, the NSW Government must immediately step in and offer a rescue package to creative industry workers in NSW.

"The creative industries in NSW now have a completely different set of priorities to what it did when this budget was brought down. The Powerhouse move must be the first on the chopping block and the \$1.5 billion saved should go straight towards keeping our creative industries afloat through a combination of wage subsidies and grants.

"There are approximately 280,900 people working in the creative Industries in NSW. Many are freelancers who would now be out of work, or experiencing a significant cut in their income, as a result of the Covid-19 shutdown.

"A thriving, productive arts and entertainment scene will be vital to the recovery of our state's economy and our community spirit. When we come out the other side of this pandemic our artists, musicians, writers and all other creative industries workers will be expected to jump back in and once again do what they do best," Ms Faehrmann said.